

COUNTRY East

TOPIC Military information from Wittenberg

REPORT NO.

EVALUATION see below

PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT 29 August to 14 September 1953

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED 29 September 1953

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REFERENCES

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

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1. Between 30 August and 6 September 1953, the Beseler Kaserne in Wittenberg was occupied by an estimated 600 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia. On 30 August, two groups, each of eight soldiers, received instruction on a heavy machine gun in the barracks yard. Two T-34/85 tanks, [redacted] were in front of the tank sheds. Fifteen T-34/85 tanks were seen in an open shed. Between 10:30 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. on 5 September, six companies, numbering about 550 troops, and three officers with ranks from major up to and including lieutenant colonel had assembled in the barracks yard. The officers took notes. The troops were addressed by one of the officers and subsequently left the installation toward the town. Trucks [redacted] were seen near the entrance of the installation.

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2. Prior to 6 September, the Flak Kaserne was occupied by about 700 to 800 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia. The barracks buildings were only partially lighted after nightfall. On 1 September, four canvas-covered tanks, presumably T-34s, were seen in front of a shed. About 20 soldiers were cleaning 10 T-34/85 tanks in an open shed. Motor vehicles [redacted] were seen en route to and from the installation.

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3. On 2 September, the Tauentzien Kaserne was lightly occupied by troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets. The large building in the center was dark, while the small side wings were lighted after nightfall. Truck [redacted] was seen in the barracks yard. ¹ On 6 September, the engineer training camp at Apollensdorf was vacant. ²

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4. Between 29 August and 7 September, the Tauentzien Kaserne and the town house were occupied by about 550 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets. On 2 September, two T-34 tanks were seen leaving the installation. Five groups of 15 soldiers each drilled in the barracks yard. About 45 soldiers left the installation toward Teuchel. Three armored scout cars went to the

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Woltersdorf troop training grounds. On 4 September, three T-34 tanks were leaving the installation and were subsequently observed clearing obstacles at the Teuchel training area. They returned at about 1:20 p.m. About 120 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets were lined up in the barracks yard, and 6 groups of 8 unarmed soldiers each were drilling. Five groups of 12 soldiers each drilled with rifles. Motor vehicles seen en route to and from the installation

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5. Between 29 August and 7 September, the Beseler Kaserne was occupied by about 1,200 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets. On 31 August, 12 groups, each of 12 soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets, were drilling and 25 troops received instruction on four 37-mm AA guns. Forty-five troops left the installation toward Teucheln. Firing with live ammunition was practiced at the firing ranges. On 4 September, 35 troops carrying practice targets and 2 groups of 25 soldiers each, carrying axes, saws and spades, left the installation toward Teuchel. Ten groups of 12 soldiers each received individual training in the barracks yard. Marksmanship training was held at the firing range near the fuel depot on Weinbergstrasse. Five T-43 tanks practiced clearing of obstacles at the Teuchel training grounds. About 120 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets engaged in the construction of field fortifications. Seven T-34 tanks were seen at driving practice in the Arado installation and the Tauntzien Kaserne. Motor vehicles seen en route to and from the installation

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6. Prior to 7 September, the Flak Kaserne was occupied by an estimated 1,500 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets. On 29 August, 15 groups, each of 12 soldiers, received individual training in the barracks yard. On 2 September, 25 soldiers received instruction on 6 x 35-mm AA guns in the barracks yard. Five armored personnel carriers, each occupied by 10 soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets, and an undetermined number of heavy machine guns left the installation toward Woltersdorf; as well as 2 T-43 tanks and 1 SP gun, each occupied by 6 EM and 1 officer; while 4 T-43 tanks, each occupied by 6 soldiers, went toward Teuchel. Six groups, each of 12 soldiers, practiced aiming at the obstacle course. On 7 September, five T-43 tanks were seen leaving the installation toward Teuchel. Twenty-five soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets received instruction on four 37-mm AA guns in the barracks yard. Work was being performed in the tank repair shops. Tanks from the Flak Kaserne, Beseler Kaserne and Taunentzien Kaserne conducted joint advanced combat firing practices at the Teuchel troop training grounds. About 120 troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets and carrying infantry weapons and light field pack participated in the exercise. Motor vehicles seen en route to and from the installation

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7. At about 5 a.m. on 9 September, a train of 6 converted boxcars and 30 flatcars was unloaded at the Wittenberg railroad station. Four T-43 tanks were seen en route toward the Arado installation and about 50 soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets were seen near the train.

8. At 6:15 a.m. on 14 September, 5 JS-2 tanks, 1 JSU-249 gun, 5 boxcarloads of ammunition and equipment and 3 boxcarloads of troops wearing red-bordered black epaulets with tank insignia were entrained at the Wittenberg railroad station. The train included 10 empty flatcars which, later, were presumably also loaded. Curfew for enlisted personnel in Wittenberg was at 8 p.m., including Sundays.

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- 25X1A 1. Comment. Major elements of the 6th Gds Tank Div are confirmed at the post until mid-September. Other elements of the division are rather safely believed to be stationed at Werder-Markendorf. Numerous reports on transportation indicated that, since early July 1953, tank units were continually rotated between the training area and the post. During the preceding two years, the tank regiments of the division had stayed at Werder-Markendorf throughout the summer months.

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- 25X1A 2. Comment. Compare with a report of early August 1953.

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